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A NEW EARLY HATCHING RECORD FOR *PLESTIODON FASCIATUS* (SAURIA, SCINCIDAE) IN VIRGINIA. — The onset of life history phenophases, such as egg laying and hatching, in ectotherms has occurred about two weeks earlier in recent times in northern latitudes apparently due to the effects of climate change (e.g., Terhivuo, 1988; Beebee, 1995; Gibbs & Breisch, 2001; Kusano & Inque, 2008). A recent observation of a reptile hatching suggests that the earlier occurrence of life history events may also be occurring in Virginia. Hatching dates of *Plestiodon fasciatus* (Common Five-lined Skink) in Virginia were reported by Mitchell (1994) to occur between 8 July and 4 August based on museum and literature records and field observations known to the early 1990s. The previous early hatching date of 8 July was derived from a laboratory incubation of a clutch of eggs I found on 16 June 1981 in Charlotte County, VA. The observation by W.H. Robertson of a naturally-incubated neonate on a garden flowerpot in Amherst, VA, reported here for 28 June 2011 extends the known early record by 10 days. This date is consistent with the earliest observation of a Common Five-lined Skink hatchling in North Carolina on 27 June (Palmer & Braswell, 1995). Hatchlings have first been observed in West Virginia on 15 July (Green & Pauley, 1987), 10 July in Maryland (McCauley, 1945), 5 August in New Jersey (R. Zappalorti, pers. comm.), and late July in Arkansas (Trauth et al., 2004). It is not possible to determine with this single observation whether timing of egg-laying and hatching in this skink are related to climate change. Numerous additional observations are needed to discern patterns. Thus, reports of the timing of life history events in Virginia should be published regularly so that a phenological database can be accumulated to evaluate the effects of climate change on the amphibians and reptiles in this region. Furthermore, all phenological records from existing data bases, unpublished theses, and other records should be sought, collated, and published to allow comparisons that may reveal

changes in historical patterns.

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- Joseph C. Mitchell
Mitchell Ecological Research Service, LLC
P.O. Box 2520
High Springs, Florida 32655-2520